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Rosenbergs' Spying Uncovered By Breaking Code, Book Reports

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Soviet spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were caught because American intelligence agents broke a Russian cipher but, for secrecy reasons, the coded information could not be used at their trial, according to an excerpt from a new book on the Central Intelligence Agency.

"The trial of the Rosenbergs would become one of the most disputed court cases of the century, in part because the government, hoping to protect its most secret source, never introduced one of the most damaging pieces of evidence against them: the decoded traffic from the New York-to-Moscow channel," writes David C. Martin in "Wilderness of Mirrors," to be published later this month by Harper & Row.

Martin writes that the Armed Forces Security Agency broke the So-

viet cipher in 1945 and "one of the first Soviet spies to be undone by the code break was the German-born physicist Klaus Fuchs."

Fuchs implicated Harry Gold, a naturalized American citizen of Russian parentage, whose confession ultimately led to the arrest, conviction and execution of the Rosenbergs of New York.

The Soviets found out about the code break in 1950, Martin says, when alerted by William Weisband, "a disloyal employee of the Armed Forces Security Agency."

"The man who betrayed America's ultra-secret was never prosecuted for his crime, since a public trial would have required revelation of the code break," Martin writes. "Instead Weisband was sentenced in one year in jail for failing to answer a summons to appear before a grand jury."